

BISHOP GEORGE AND THE YOUNG PREACHER.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

An aged traveller, worn and weary, was gently urging on his tired beast, just as the sun was dropping behind the range of hills that bounds the horizon of that rich and picturesque country in the vicinity of Springfield, Ohio. It was a sultry August evening, and he had journeyed a distance of thirty-five miles since morning, his pulses throbbing under the influence of a burning sun. At Fairfield he had been hospitably entertained by one who had recognised the veteran soldier of the cross, and who had ministered to him for his Master's sake, of the benefits himself had received from the hand which feedeth the young lions when they lack; and he had travelled on refreshed in spirit. But many a weary mile had he journeyed over since then, and now as the evening shades darkened around, he felt the burden of age and toil heavy upon him, and he desired the pleasant retreat he had pictured to himself when that day's pilgrimage should be accomplished.

It was not long before the old man checked his tired animal at the door of the anxiously look for haven of rest. A middle-aged woman was at hand, to whom he mildly applied for accommodations for him and horse.

"I don't know," said she, coldly, after scrutinizing for some time the appearance of the traveller, which was not the most promising, "that we can take you in, old man. You seem tired; however, and I'll see if the Minister of the circuit who is here to-night, will let you lodge with him."

The young circuit preacher soon made his appearance, and consequently swaggering up to the old man, examined him for some moments inquisitively, then asked a few impertinent questions—and finally, after adjusting his hair half-a-dozen times, feeling his smoothly shaven chin as often, consented that the stranger should share his bed for the night, and turning upon his heel entered the house.

The traveller, aged and weary as he was, dismounted, and led his faithful animal to the stable, where, with his own hands he rubbed him down, watered him and gave him food, and then entered the inhospitable mansion where he had expected so much kindness. A Methodist family resided in the house, and as the circuit preacher was to be there that day, great preparations were made to entertain him, and a number of the Methodist young ladies of the neighborhood had been invited, so that quite a party met the eyes of the stranger as he entered, not one of whom took the slightest notice of him, and he wearily sought a vacant chair in the corner, out of direct observation, but where he could note all that was going on. And his anxious eye showed that he was no careless observer of what was transpiring around him.

The young Minister played his part with all the frivoly and foolishness of a city beau, and nothing like religion escaped his lips. Now he was chattering and dandying senseless compliments with this young lady, and now engaged in trifling repartee with another, who was anxious to seem interesting in his eyes.

The stranger, after an hour, during which no refreshments had been prepared for him, asked to be shown to his room, to which he retired unnoticed—grieved and shocked at the conduct of the family and the minister. Taking from his saddlebags a well worn bible, he seated himself in a chair, and was soon buried in thought, holy and elevating, and had food to eat which those who passed him by in pity and scorn dreamed not of. Hour after hour passed away, and no one

came to invite the old worn down traveller, to partake of the luxurious supper which was served below. Towards eleven o'clock the minister came up stairs, and without pause or prayer, hastily threw off his clothes, and got into the very middle of a small bed, which was to be the resting place of the old man as well as himself. After a while the aged stranger rose up, and after partially disrobing himself, knelt down and remained for many minutes in fervent prayer. The earnest breathing out of his soul soon arrested the attention of the young preacher, who began to feel some few reproofs of conscience for his own neglect of this duty. The old man now rose from his knees, and after slowly undressing himself, got into bed, or rather, upon the edge of the bed, for the young preacher had taken possession of the centre and would not, voluntarily, move an inch. In this uncomfortable position the stranger lay for some time, in silence. At length the younger of the two made a remark, to which the elder replied in a style and manner that arrested his attention. On this he removed over an inch or two and made more room.

"How far have you come to-day, old gentleman?"

"Thirty-five miles."

"From where?"

"From Springfield."

"Ah, indeed! You must be tired after so long a journey, for one of your age."

"Yes, this poor old body is much worn down by long and constant travel, and I feel that the journey of to-day has exhausted me much."

The young minister moved over a little.

"You do not belong to Springfield then?"

"No. I have no abiding place."

"How?"

"I have no continuing city. My home is beyond this vale of tears."

Another move of the minister.

"How far have you travelled on your present journey?"

"From Philadelphia."

"From Philadelphia! (In evident surprise.) The Methodist General Conference was in session there a short time since. Had it broken up when you left?"

"It adjourned the day before I started."

"Ah, indeed!"—moving still farther over towards the front side of the bed, allowing the stranger better accommodations. "Had Bishop George left when you came out?"

"Yes—he started at the same time I did,—we left in company."

"Indeed?"

Here the circuit preacher relinquished a full half of the bed, and politely requested the stranger to occupy a larger space.

"How did the Bishop look? He is getting quite old now and feeble, is he not?"

"He carries his age tolerable well. But his labor is a hard one, and he begins to show signs of failing strength."

"He is expected this way in a week or two. How glad I shall be to shake hands with the old veteran of the Cross! But you say you left in company with the good old man—how far did you come together?"

"We travelled alone for a long distance."

"You travelled alone with the Bishop?"

"Yes! we have been intimate for years!"

"You intimate with Bishop George?"

"Yes, why not?"

"Bless me! Why did I not know that! But may I be so bold as to enquire your name?"

After a moment's hesitation, the stranger replied—

"George."

"George! George! Not Bishop George?"

"They call me Bishop George," meekly replied the old man.

"Why—why—bless me! Bishop

George—exclaimed the new abashed preacher—springing from the bed—"You have had no supper! I will instantly call up the family.—Why did you not tell us who you were!"

"Stop—stop—my friend," said the Bishop gravely, "I want no supper here, and should not eat any if it were got for me. If an old man, toil-worn and weary, fainting with travelling through all the long summer day, was not considered worthy of a meal by this family, who profess to have set up the altar of God in their house, Bishop George surely is not. He is at best, but a man, and has no claims beyond those of common humanity."

A night of severe mortification, the young minister had never experienced. The Bishop kindly admonished him, and warned him of the great necessity there was of his adorning the doctrines of Christ, by following him sincerely and humbly. Gently but earnestly he endeavored to win him back from his wandering heart, and direct him to trust more in God and less in his own strength.

In the morning the Bishop prayed with him, long and fervently, before he left the chamber; and was glad to see his heart melted into contrition. Soon after the Bishop descended, and was met by the heads of the family with a thousand sincere apologies. He mildly silenced them, and asked to have his horse brought out. The horse was accordingly soon in readiness, and the Bishop, taking up his saddlebags, was preparing to depart.

"But surely, Bishop," urged the distressed matron, "you will not thus leave us? Wait a few minutes—breakfast is on the table."

"No, Sister L.—I cannot take breakfast here. You did not consider a poor, toil-worn traveller, worthy of a meal and your Bishop has no claim but such as humanity urges."

And thus he departed, leaving the family and minister in confusion and sorrow. He did not act thus for resentment, for such an emotion did not rise in his heart, but he desired to teach them a lesson such as they would not easily forget.

Six months from this time the Ohio Annual Conference met at Cincinnati, and the young minister was to present himself for ordination as a Deacon; and Bishop George was to be the presiding Bishop.

On the first day of the assembling of the Conference, our minister's heart sunk within him as he saw the venerable Bishop take his seat. So great was his grief and agitation that he was soon obliged to leave the room. That evening, as the Bishop was seated alone in his chamber, the Rev. Mr. — was announced, and he requested to be shown up.

He grasped the young man by the hand with a cordiality which he did not expect, for he made careful enquiries, and found that since they had met before, a great change had been wrought in him. He was now as humble and pious, as he was before self-sufficient and worldly-minded. As a father would have received a disobedient but repentant child, so did this good man receive his erring but contrite brother.—They mingled their tears together, while the young preacher, wept as a child, even upon the bosom of his spiritual father. At the session he was ordained, and he is now one of the most pious and useful ministers on the Ohio Conference.

Athenæum & Visitor.

GUARDIAN ANGELS.

"Therefore for spirits, I am so far from denying their existence, that I could easily believe that not only whole countries, but particular persons have their tutelary and guardian angels." [Religio Medici.]

It is one of the most beautiful doctrines ever inculcated, that

"there are noble essences in Heaven, that bear a friendly regard unto their friendly natures on the earth." And although it may be nought but a dazzling error, yet mankind might be pardoned for cheating themselves with so agreeable a delusion. It is indeed one of the finest ideas ever conceived, that man is not placed here in an entire reliance upon his strength—a poor, forlorn wanderer, with no guide, save the suggestions of his own corrupt nature—but that there is ever near him guardian spirits, whose kindly counsels attend him on his pilgrimage. The argument for such a theory seems at least very plausible—that if there is a gradual scale of ascension in the order of being, from brutes to angels, such an essence as we may speak of may form a connecting link. And who shall say that such beings do not exist? that they are not one of the thousand mysteries which envelope our being? Life itself is a wonder, full of inexplicable mysteries. Our very existence is an enigma. And who shall fathom the immortal soul? Who shall resolve its sympathies and trace home its mysterious connection with the body? Since, then, our nature and being are so inseparable, is the theory we are considering so startling to reason? Surely, if Dr Johnson, Sir Thomas Browne, and other great and wise men, have believed in the appearances of ghosts, apparitions, and other strange sights, we may indulge a belief so fraught with pleasure and consolation. Of the same nature, and equally sublime, is the doctrine that the departed spirits of our friends and relatives are permitted to visit the earth, and to mingle their sympathies with the objects of their affection. When we think of the anguish of parting with those we love, of looking for the last time upon the face which has smiled away our woes, how gladly do we cling to the idea of their returning to soothe our distress, and to lend their invisible influence to bind up the bruised heart! Such a belief would soften the bitterness of separation, and beguile death of its sting. It is indeed a painful thought that the forms which have insensibly entwined themselves about us till they have become linked with our being, must be torn away and wedded with the dust—that the eye which beams upon us with tenderness unutterable, must become dim in death and the voice whose music hath so oft stilled the aching heart, must falter its last farewell. But more chilling is the thought, that the loves and friendships, and all the other endearments which lent a charm to existence, must perish with the heart's last throes. But if thou canst believe that the love once so found, faded not with life's taper, but e'en now, "Softly trembles with a pulse as true as thine," that the friend once so warm and pure, is still sympathising in thy joys and woes, cling to the hope, woo it to thy soul, phantom though it may be. Art thou an orphan, weeping for an affectionate parent? dry the tear; hush the sobbings of thy young heart. She whose love thou thoughst lost to thee for ever, thy fond mother, is still near thee, watching thine every step with an affection that never tires, and an eye that never slumbers—whispering words of consolation, in thine ear, and soothing thy rugged path. Art thou an husband, whose widowed heart is lamenting the tender partner of thy bosom? Cease thy complaint. The love e'en here so pure, now etherealized and freed from all earthly alloy, with thee in thy wanderings. List what it says:

"Near thee, still near thee! trust thy soul's deep dreaming?

Oh! love is not an earthly rose, to thee! E'en when I soar where fiery stars are beaming.

Thine image wanders with me through the sky."

Gentle shades! Forms unseen!

Ev'n while I write, at this still and solemn hour of midnight—perhaps ye are hovering, with untired wings o'er the slumber of the loved—whispering words of peace to the mourner, or, in dreams, restoring the objects of his idolizing affections—telling the joys of a better land, where love and friendship bloom fadeless, and part no more for ever!

From Zion's Herald. CAMP MEETING SCENE.

We extract the following graphic description of a camp meeting incident from the *Knickerbocker*. How finely it will be seen, the preacher took advantage of the leaping of the fawn into the enclosure of the camp ground, as a shelter from the pursuit of the wolf, and with what beauty, earnestness and eloquence, he seized upon that incident to warn sinners to "flee to the fold of God."

Disembarking at Cincinnati, I set off on foot to explore the cavern of Kentucky and Virginia. Travelling later one evening than usual, I lost my way in one of those extensive forests, which still skirt some of those western cities. After wandering about for some time, on turning a precipitous ridge which obstructed my course; I came suddenly upon one of those singular gatherings of the church militant, called camp meetings. Before me stretched a grove of tall pines beneath whose dark foliage, and in striking contrast with the same, were pitched numerous white tents embracing a level of several acres in extent, underbrush, and carpeted with the falling tresses of the overhanging boughs. On one side of this enclosure, several feet from the ground a plain lodge, quadrangularly formed of rough boards nailed to the trees while the pulpit in front, and benches around the sides, for the elders and the ministers who were to address the congregation. From this spot to various points in the enclosure, stretched in diverging lines, the straight poles of lofty pines, felled for the occasion, across whose prostrate length, with the interspace of here and there a long drawn aisle, were laid the rude seats of those hardy worshippers. Innumerable lamps were suspended on all sides of the encampment, blending their flickering light with the glare of pine torches from the several tents where the evening's repast was in preparation, while millions of fire flies shot like tiny meteors along the dark openings of the surrounding forests, and the eyes of the sleepless stars looked on as if to witness the devotions of that primeval temple.

As I paused to survey the wonderful scene, the wild howl of a wolf rang through the shuddering air, and a moment after a fawn passed me, and bounding into the enclosure, dropped down exhausted in one of the open aisles. This singular instance was succeeded by a dead silence, which was presently interrupted by the voice of the speaker, who had just finished the last discourse of the evening, and was about reading the concluding hymn.—"Welcome," said the aged man, with compassionate emotion, "welcome, poor, wearied and persecuted wanderer, to the refuge and rest ye seek not in vain! Ye did well to flee hither from thy ravenous pursuer, for thereby have your days been lengthened and ye shall yet range through the green places of the wilderness, where the hand of God bringeth forth the tender herb and the pleasant water courses, even for creatures such as ye. Pilgrims of the world, continued he, turning to his hushed auditory, "shall the beast that perish be wiser in their day and generation than ye, who are fashioned after the image of the All-wise? Flee to the fold of God! The wild pigeon shrinks to her covert at the scream of the wood hawk, and the roebuck bounds fleetly from the yell of the panther, while ye, who are encompassed with many foes, having eyes, see not, and ears, hear not, or heed not the voice of the prowler. Woe ye not that ye, like that poor panting hind, were hunted up and down in this dark wilderness of the world. Flee to the fold of God! Doth not temptation haunt your footsteps from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof? Doth not remorse dart his fiery arrows into your bleeding hearts at every turn? Doth not conscience smite ye with its avenging sword whenever ye turn a deaf ear to the still small voice? Flee to the fold of God! Do not the cares of the world, its vanity and vexation of spirit surround ye, when ye rise up and when ye dream dreams? Flee to the fold of God! Is not death the ever present shadow of your earthliness, and doth not the Prince of the power of the air—the mighty Nimrod of your princely souls—trace your guilty souls along this pil-